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Dr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy
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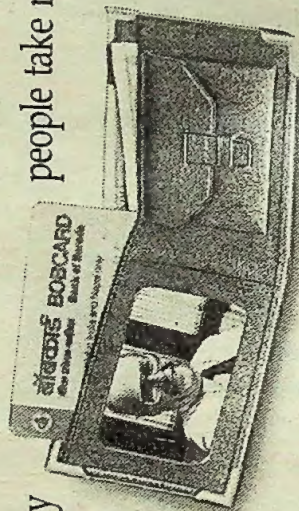
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Let noble thoughts come to us from every side
— Rigveda, 1-89-i



Prayer

गीतं मधुरं पीतं मधुरं
भुक्तं मधुरं सुप्तं मधुरम् ।
रूपं मधुरं तिलकं मधुरं
मधुराधिपतेरखिलं मधुरम् ॥

*Geetam madhuram peetam madhuram
bhuktam madhuram suptam madhuram
roopam madhuram tilakam madhuram
Madhuraadhipaterakhilam madhuram*

Sweet is His singing, sweet His drinking, sweet His eating;
sweet His sleeping; sweet His form; sweet His forehead mark;
sweet everything about the Lord of Madhura.

— Madhuraashtaka

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A Letter from the President



अमृतं तु विद्या

Madras
July 31, 1996

Scarcity Conditions and Import of Foodgrains

II

The November-December 1965 Parliament Session was engaged in discussing the food situation on many occasions. There were two aspects of the discussion in both the Houses — the first was how to meet the scarcity situation of 1965-66 and the other was the long-term policy to increase food production so that the country might become self-sufficient. As far as meeting the scarcity condition of 1965-66 was concerned one view put forward



by the Communist and the Left group was that we should give up the import of foodgrains under PL-480 from USA. One of the points made in the Lok Sabha in my reply was:

I would request Hon. Members to realise what would be the implications if there is a real shortage and who would suffer when there is a scarcity and short-fall. It is not we members here who would suffer. Once scarcity conditions begin to persist, it would be the people in the lowest rung of the ladder who would be affected first and it would go on progressively affecting the other sectors. So when Hon. Members want me to take the risk of not importing anything and carry on with what we have, they are really asking me to play with the lives of the poorer sections of the people. I am not prepared for that. Even if there is self-respect at stake, at this time I attach greater importance to the lives of the poorer sections of the people. That should be safeguarded first. Whatever might be the ideological and other issues involved in it, as Food Minister responsible for the administration of the food economy of the country, I am sorry I am not in a position to accept this advice

that we should give up imports, whether under PL-480 or through other arrangements.

Unfortunately, some of us have an attitude that anything coming from USA is wrong, whether it is PL-480 or any suggestion whatsoever. So we are not in a position to make a detached judgment. But I would like Hon. Members to keep this in mind that as far as we are concerned, we are motivated by what is in the best interest of our country. To the best of our judgment, we try to take decisions which we consider to be in the interest of the country. We may be wrong, but to accuse us saying that we are taking a particular decision because there is pressure from USA or somebody else is a wrong approach and if I may say so an inferiority complex approach. I want to assure the House that we are strong enough to resist any pressure and we are not going to take any decision which is against our interest simply because there is pressure from any quarter whatever.

In dealing with the scarcity food situation I emphasised the need for taking care of the children giving them first priority:

First I would deal with the

problem of children, to which I attach the greatest importance. We had a preliminary discussion with the Finance Minister also with regard to this problem and I am glad that the Finance Minister, in spite of the difficult resources situation, has agreed to give high priority to the children's programme and with the co-operation of the various international agencies also we hope to launch a large programme of children's welfare. Though we are starting this under this critical situation, my hope is that looking after our children will become a permanent feature of the country. Also, the problem of nursing and pregnant mothers will have to be tackled along with it. This will be a composite programme.

After dealing with the food situation I gave the following details of the new agricultural policy in my speech:

We had the experience of what we call the IADPD or intensive agricultural development programme district. Even though we had not succeeded to the extent that we had expected in increasing the programme in these areas, this programme has given us certain concrete lessons. It has shown that while material inputs like seed, water,

fertiliser, plant protection are all important, each by itself gives only a marginal result, if in addition to seed and water, we have enough of fertilisers, then it is much better, and with plant protection, it becomes a package. It is not as if the total result of all this is equal to the sum of individual benefits which we derive if we use them in isolation; it is not $A+B+C+D$ but it is $2(A+B+C+D)$ or $3(A+B+C+D)$ when we have it in package. That is the lesson that we learnt.

What we are now trying to see is whether by a large and more intensive application of this package programme it would be possible for us to reach a level of production and have additional production which will meet the requirements. It is from this point of view that our scientists and our technicians and our administrators reviewed this programme and on that basis they have given us advice that if we concentrated our efforts in a given area where we have assured water supply and we have the necessary extension service also concentrated in that area, then it should be possible for us to achieve much better results than by merely dispersing our effort in a thin way throughout the country. It is not that

no effort would be made in the other parts of the country. The general programme of development will go on, but we shall be concentrating our efforts in a definite area, in the intensive development area which we are trying to take up. It is no use trying with our traditional varieties which we have here. Even with the best of practices, with all the resources put in, the potentiality for yield of these traditional varieties is limited. For example, if we take up our traditional varieties of paddy even though they may stand on the field for five or six months, their maximum yield is limited to 3000 to 4000 lbs; whereas there are varieties available which give greater yield; those varieties can be evolved here also. If those varieties are used and the same agronomical practices and resources are given to the optimum extent, then the minimum production is at 6000 lbs. and we are able to reach even 8500 to 9000 lbs. With a new variety of paddy, I am glad to say that my own colleague the Deputy Minister in his farm has been able to achieve a production of 8200 lbs. in one acre; this has been done with a new variety, with all the agronomical practices which are available for this

purpose. Even in the worst of the farms, the maximum production has been round about 4000 to 5000 lbs.

We are trying to identify the variety of foodgrains which would have this high-yield potential. I am glad to say that we have identified varieties for six major grains, namely, paddy, wheat, maize, bajra, sorghum and ragi. We are now in the process of multiplying the seeds of these varieties. Our programme by the end of the Fourth Plan is to reach 32.5 million acres which represent about 50 per cent of the net sown area. In these areas we are going to concentrate. These 32.5 million acres would require production of seed and the fertilisers for this variety in order to yield the maximum would be in the range of 80 to 120 lbs. of nitrogen per acre. These would require plant protection and assured water supply also. Now we are trying to identify each of these material inputs in order to ensure that they would be available in sufficient quantity and quality for these 32.5 million acres.

The food situation was discussed in the Rajya Sabha on 7th December 1965 and went on for the three days. The main speaker from the Opposition was Bhupesh Gupta belonging to the Communist Party

of India. He had been at Oxford University and was a student of Dr. Radhakrishnan. He took the same stand as his colleague Hiren Mukerjee in the Lok Sabha saying that it was wrong for us to import wheat under PL-480. In the course of his speech he made the following remarks:

Madam Deputy Chairman, it looks as though in the Agriculture Ministry, Ministers may come and go but the PL-480 lives for ever. May I suggest to the Hon. Minister—I believe he is a Gandhite and his motto is Satyameva Jayate—to kindly put up a sign board before his Agriculture Ministry saying 'Indian Branch of PL-480'. That is how he should signify himself and his Government.

Madam Deputy Chairman, I say this with sorrow because here was an occasion to rouse the patriotism of the people still further, to mobilise and harness the nation into action that will make our country self-sufficient in the matter of food. No such battle is sought to be waged. On the contrary, even before fighting the battle the Hon. Minister has raised the white flag to the American billionaires to dole out PL-480 for unconcealed political purposes.

With regard to the new policy

in agriculture he made the following points:

It is also a continuation of the same old policy, but what has happened to the old intensive agricultural development programmes started with the help of the Ford Foundation? It has miserably failed, so much so that we are on the brink of a catastrophic food situation to-day. Are we to understand that just because the gentleman from Tamilnad handles the same old policy, bequeathed to him by the previous Minister, the land is going to be full of grains and so on? I do not think that you can achieve the target of 125 million or 120 million tons of foodgrains unless basic structural and institutional changes are made in the agrarian sphere and other aspects of the food administration.

He ended his speech with an onslaught on the Government in the following words:

Madam Deputy Chairman, if this food policy remains, then the solemn task of the nation is to meet the challenge on the food front not only by producing more but also by fighting this policy of the Government. Unless this policy is defeated, unless we mobilise the entire nation and unitedly and

solemnly strike against this discredited and dishonourable policy which Subramaniam has tried to sell to the country and for which he takes advantage of the situation which has arisen, unless we do that, I am afraid we will not solve the food problem. Let me tell Subramaniam, cooperation by all means you shall receive, ungrudging cooperation of the Opposition, provided the policies are properly oriented, democratically conceived and executed in the interest of the nation and the people. You should not come out with your policies for pleasing the Americans, making the dependence of the country a permanent feature of our national life and thereby opening up all avenues for interference and subversion by foreign powers of our economy. But if you do that, then obviously you shall be met with opposition and you shall meet with resistance, whatever it may be. That is the choice. Here is the choice for you. Do you want to mobilise the nation and get the cooperation of the nation and the unity of the nation on the basis of a solemn, democratic and truly national food policy, or do you want to have a policy in which under the name of the emergency and armed with the Defence of India Rules, by threats and browbeatings, the nation is sought to be bullied into submission? I tell you, the nation has fought a

battle. I mean on the frontier and not always with the things that the men needed, but their courage and patriotism never failed them. Even on the food front we shall no doubt fight it out. The people will know how to fight and how to see that the nation becomes self-sufficient, how to stop this dependence and to solve this problem. But my only hope is that this Government even at this late hour, will see reason and recast its policy in the interest of the people as a whole and in the light of the grim experience of the past. That is our hope still at this late hour. But I know this Government being what it is and knowing the manner in which it is behaving, now wobbling under American policies and pressure, I know that this Government will not easily do it. But I appeal to the Members of the Congress Party in whose patriotism I have not the slightest doubt—let us for the sake of the country, for the sake of the honour of the country and for the sake of its future and its destiny, let us unite and defeat these treasury benches which are wedded to this policy of PL-480 and let us defeat this ignominious food policy and this ignominious Ministry.

C. Subramaniam

(C. Subramaniam)

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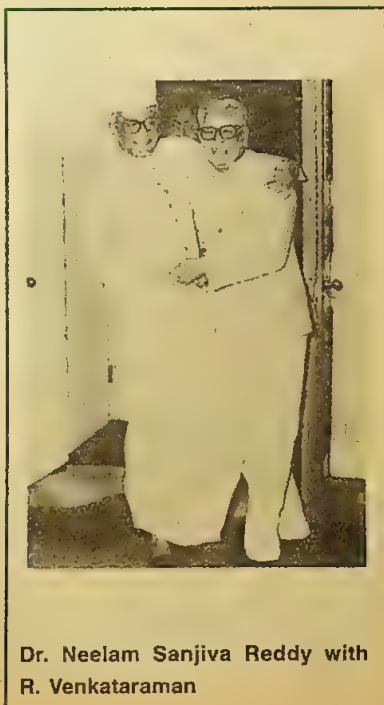


Sri Neelam Sanjiva Reddy, The Peasant President Of India An Immaculate Life

**R. Venkataraman,
Former President of India**

Yet another stalwart of Indian politics has passed away leaving the country poorer. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy, while still a student, plunged into the freedom movement and gathered all his knowledge and wisdom in the hard school of politics. He was elected to the Legislative Assembly of the then Madras Presidency at the age of 33 and became a Minister thereof at the age of 36. Thereafter he rose step by step to the position of Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Union Minister in Lal Bahadur Shastri's Cabinet, Speaker of Lok Sabha and finally the President of India in 1977. Few statesmen in India have held such a wide variety of offices and with such great distinction.

Sanjiva Reddy's forte was his robust commonsense. He had the



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gift of sifting the substance and from the dross of formalities, rules and regulations and providing an acceptable solution to all problems.

The reorganisation of States witnessed myriads of border and other disputes leading to violence and bloodshed. Linguistic frenzies assumed ugly proportions. So far as the then Madras and Andhra were concerned, it was quietly and peacefully settled by the two almost similar statesmen Kamaraj and Sanjiva Reddy. The Pataskar formula which was applied for sorting out the respective areas was in reality an agreement between these two leaders on the principles to be applied for demarcating the borders. Even during the period of the controversy, Kamaraj and Sanjiva Reddy were good friends. During this period an A.I.C.C. meeting was held in Agra and Kamaraj and I were allotted one room and Sanjiva Reddy another room. So close were Kamaraj and Sanjiva Reddy that they both moved into one room leaving me wondering what they would discuss about Tiruttani and Tirupati!

As Speaker of Lok Sabha, he used to find acceptable solutions and never went by the rule book.

Even when irate members referred to the rules, Sanjiva Reddy used to pat the rules book and say that the rules were there but never opened the book. **He was one of the few Speakers who carried the House with him more by his commonsense than by rules.** It is said that a genius is one who has commonsense in an uncommon degree. Sanjiva Reddy was one such.

In matters relating to administration, Sanjiva Reddy never allowed rules and regulations to thwart justice. He was guided by one principle, namely what was fair and just. In this he bore a very strong resemblance to Kamaraj. Sanjiva Reddy laid great emphasis on agricultural development as he firmly believed that rural prosperity could be achieved only through better agricultural and irrigation facilities. The gigantic Nagarjuna Sagar Project is an outstanding monument to his foresight and courage.

Sanjiva Reddy was a man of principles and he maintained the best traditions of democracy by tendering resignation of the office of the Chief Minister following the judgement in the Kurnool transport case. Despite the fact that the

Advocate General had advised him that it was not necessary for him to file an affidavit and there was no moral turpitude involved, Sanjiva Reddy quit the office in accordance with the highest traditions of democracy.

Sanjiva Reddy's tenure of the Union Cabinet from 1964-67 was marked by quiet efficiency. But it was as a Speaker of the Lok Sabha from 1967-69 that he achieved a national reputation. He was considered as one of the best Speakers that our country has produced. Suave, friendly, always keeping his cool and accommodating diverse points of view Sanjiva Reddy eminently qualified for the post of the President which fell vacant in 1969.

There are many "ifs" in the history of every nation. Had the British granted "Provincial Autonomy" in 1919 or had the Cripps Mission conceded "Dominion Status", during the second World War, India might have been spared of all the suffering and sacrifice her patriots had to go through during the Quit India Movement. Had the Prime Minister accepted the candidature of Sanjiva Reddy nominated by the Congress

Parliamentary Board or had the old guard conceded the principle of the Prime Minister choosing the President as, under the Constitution, these two high dignitaries had to work in close co-operation, the Congress split might have been saved.

The Congress split in 1969 was a fatal blow to the great organisation built on its traditions of sacrifice and service to the nation. As against those soaked in service and sacrifice others who had no record of national service, who did not have faith in the Gandhian ideology of truth and *ahimsa* and who did not even accept the discipline of wearing Khadi, became the neo-Congressmen. The post-independence generation swept away the traditional Congressmen and a stalwart like Sanjiva Reddy was defeated in the Lok Sabha elections in 1971.

Life is always full of ups and downs and in how one handles the downs lies the true proof of man. Sanjiva Reddy suffered an eclipse in his life during 1969 to 1977. The peasant-politician shed the latter and devoted himself to farming without any bitterness or rancour. He told friends who met him during this period that he had come back

to his own.

But destiny had the highest honour in store for him. He bounced back to Lok Sabha in 1977 and again became the Speaker. In the same year, he was unanimously elected President of India with Indira Gandhi herself acquiescing in the choice.

The peasant President carried the high office with great dignity. In his state visits, abroad as well as in the high level talks with visiting dignitaries, he deeply impressed them with his simple elegance and measured and mature views. It was his lot to work with three Prime Ministers during his term, Morarji Desai, Charan Singh and Indira Gandhi. With every one of them, his relations were cordial and correct. He had his share of Constitutional problems and he handled them with skill and competence. In asking Y.B. Chavan, after the fall of Morarji's government, whether he was ready, able and willing to form the alternative government, Sanjiva Reddy followed the correct constitutional convention of giving the Leader of Opposition the first option to form the

Government. Later, when ordering dissolution of the Lok Sabha on the advice of Charan Singh, he used his discretion as he was convinced that no stable government could be formed by the Lok Sabha. In his book "Without Fear or Favour" Sanjiva Reddy has specifically mentioned all the circumstances.

Sanjiva Reddy was deeply attached to the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and had participated in several functions of the Bhavan in all parts of India. The Bhavan honoured him by conferring on him the prestigious Honorary Membership in token of its esteem to one who was a friend, philosopher and guide to the organisation.

Above all, Sanjiva Reddy was a warm and affable friend. Cheerful by disposition, he was at home with the highest dignitaries as well as the humble Congress worker. He had a charm that made every one feel at home with him. My association with Sanjiva Reddy from 1946 till his very end is a precious memory.

May Neelam Sanjiva Reddy's immaculate life inspire future generations.!

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Dr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy

Dr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy was born on May 19, 1913 at Illur, a sleepy, tiny, dusty village in Anantapur Taluk in Rayalaseema, a famine-prone area known for its economic backwardness. His parents, Sri Neelam Chinnappa Reddy and Smt. Subbamma, belonged to an enlightened, enterprising, lower middle class family. Neelam in common parlance means blue, indicating a particular variety of precious gem. Somehow the term 'Neelam' has been the prefix of this particular Reddy family of Illur.

To Rayalaseema, the nation owes its rich legacy of the priceless treasures of Hampi architecture, Tirupati and Tirumala of Lord Venkateswara and His Divine consort Padmavati Devi, and Sri Sailam Hills of Lord Mallikarjuna Swamy and His divine consort Bhramaramba Devi. Rayalaseema, in its hoary days, was reputed as "Ratnala Seema" (a mine of gems). Unfortunately, having been ravaged by famines, it has now come to be derisively called "Ralla Seema" (a region of stones without fertile lands). What an irony of fate!

II

Neelam Chinnappa Reddy was blessed with four sons, Sanjiva, Rajasekhara, Prabhakara and Ramasubba. All of them made a mark in life. Rajasekhara became a leading figure in the Communist movement, Prabhakara a prominent advocate and Ramasubba, a competent aeronautic engineer after studying aeronautics in London. Sanjiva's idealistic father, with a view to giving him value — based education, sent his eldest son Sanjiva to the well-known Adayar School in Madras, sponsored by the Theosophical Society under the guidance of Dr. Annie Besant who pioneered and led the Indian Home Rule Movement. She also presided over the Indian National Congress Calcutta session in 1917. Sanjiva

had his collegiate education in the Government Arts College, Anantapur.

In 1929, Mahatma Gandhi visited Anantapur and young Sanjiva came under the magic spell of the "semi-naked Fakir", quit the college and plunged headlong into the freedom movement, unmindful of premature demise of his father and the consequent family responsibility that devolved on his young shoulders. He sometimes used to jovially say, "I am not a graduate of a University of Education, but a graduate of the University of Life!"

His motto was, and has always been "Nation first, family and self next".

III

Sanjiva Reddy's impeccable political career has been well covered in the articles by some of his great contemporaries in this issue.

Therefore, I shall only briefly highlight Sanjiva Reddy the Man. He firmly believed, like Gandhiji who baptised him in national life, that right means are as important as ends.

Abhaya, fearlessness, was one of his ingrained qualities. Polite, but always free and frank, he never indulged in double-think and double-talk.

Like Rajaji, whom he revered and often quoted as symbolising modern

India's ideal of clean and efficient public administration, he was a staunch adherent of high standards of probity and rectitude in public life.

He was one of the earliest of our leaders to set the healthy example of submitting declarations of property (moveable and immoveable) standing in the names of himself, his wife and son whenever he became a Minister. He started this practice religiously way back from 1960. This he did when Jawaharlalji, Lal Bahadurji and Indiraji were Prime Ministers. (See facsimiles of letter dated April 19, 1966 and October 11, 1981 to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi; at the end of this article)

At the age of 36, he became a Minister in the then composite State of Madras. How he unceremoniously ignored, even though still in the second rung of Andhra's political ladder, the recommendatory letters to him by some of the powerful big bosses of Andhra Pradesh and rebuked the bearers of those recommendatory letters was a legend in the Madras of those days, known for its clean and efficient administration. So was his resignation in 1964 from the Chief Ministership of Andhra Pradesh in the wake of some remarks by the High Court on technical grounds regarding the

nationalisation of bus routes. It is a classic example of scrupulous adherence to unexceptional probity by a person holding high ministerial office. It did not involve any moral turpitude on his part. The State Advocate General and many Congress leaders dissuaded him but, owning moral responsibility, he stood steadfast and refused to retract.

IV

As President of India, Dr. Reddy sought to safeguard the dignity of the highest office of the nation and sense of self-respect. Let me narrate a striking instance. During a State visit in 1980 to the then mighty Soviet Union, President Leonid Brezhnev hosted a banquet in honour of President Reddy. As a customary protocol, President Reddy invited Brezhnev for a return ceremonial dinner, which was readily accepted. A few hours before the dinner time, Brezhnev sent a message to his Indian counterpart conveying his inability to attend the dinner in view of the sudden demise of one of his colleagues. President Reddy as an act of polite but firm reproof decided not to cancel the dinner. It was a jolt to the imperious Kremlin top brass. Brezhnev felt impelled to send his Foreign Affairs Minister Mr. Andrei Gromyko to attend the dinner with a explanation to President Reddy. Brushing aside

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protocol, Brezhnev also deemed it necessary to call on Sanjiva Reddy to explain his position fifteen minutes before Reddy's drive to the Moscow Airport and accompanied him to the airport to bid him goodbye (From 'From Farm House to Rashtrapati Bhavan' — 1989. Booklinks Corporation).

The President in the Indian Constitution is the Supreme Commander of the Defence Forces. Whenever he went abroad, his programme of arrival and departure were circulated, among other dignitaries, also to the three Chiefs of the Defence Forces.

On his return from a foreign tour in October 1980 the Chief of Air Staff was not present at the Airport. President Reddy wrote to the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to "call for this Officer's explanation for the serious lapse and take suitable action and also keep me informed." (See facsimile of letter of October 23, 1980 from the President to the Prime Minister and her reply of November 7, 1980.— at the end of this article.)

He insisted on being regularly kept informed about the important dealings and developments in the country by the Prime Minister (See President's Secretary Shri V.K. Rao's letter dated December 26, 1981 to the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Dr. P.C.

Alexander).

In 1978, the Bhavan took the initiative to form the National Committee to observe the centenary of Rajaji, a Founder Member of the Bhavan and one of its staunchest friends, guides and philosophers. Rashtrapati Reddy held Rajaji in the highest esteem. He deeply appreciated Bhavan's initiative and with enthusiasm accepted our request to head the Rajaji Centenary National Committee.

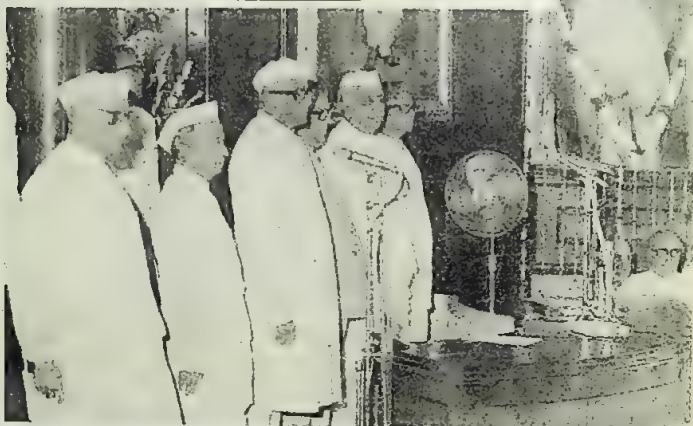
The Vice-Chairpersons were Acharya J.B. Kripalani, Shri Jayaprakash Narayan, Dr. V.V. Giri, Smt. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, Shri. M.C. Chagla, and Shri K. Santhanam.

A United Kingdom Committee under the Chairmanship of Lord Mountbatten was also set up.

A compact Executive Committee was formed with Dr. R.R. Diwakar as Chairman, Shri Jaisukhlal Hathi and Shri C. Subramaniam as Co-Chairmen and myself as Secretary.

Rashtrapati Reddy presided over several meetings of the Centenary Committee at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. The Centenary Committee formulated a 12-point project. One of them was unveiling of the portrait of Rajaji in the Central Hall of Parliament. Justice K.S. Hedge, as Speaker, readily gave consent to have the portrait and in consultation with him the names of the speakers

and relevant details of the function were finalised. Thereafter, I met Rashtrapati Reddy and he gave his whole-hearted approval. The then Vice-President, Shri B.D. Jatti, Prime Minister Morarji Desai, Speaker K.S. Hegde and Shri C. Subramaniam accepted the invitation to participate



At the Central hall of Parliament (L to R) Shri Morarji Desai (Prime Minister), Shri B. D. Jatti (Vice-President), Dr. N. Sanjiva Reddy (President), Shri K.S. Hegde (Speaker), Shri Yeshwantrao Chavan and Shri C. Subramaniam (Bhavan's President). At the extreme right is Shri S. Ramakrishnan (Bhavan's Executive Secretary and Director General)

and speak.

The invitation cards were expeditiously printed and delivered to the Ministers, M.P.'s as also some diplomats, captains of commerce and industry, trade unionists and noted social workers. We, in the Bhavan, were full of excitement.

The function was scheduled to be held in the Central Hall of Parliament at 10.00 a.m. on August 21, 1988. The previous evening at 7 p.m. a telephone call came from Shri P.L.N. Sanjiva Reddy, IAS, Secretary to the President, who is an ardent admirer of Rajaji and friend of the Bhavan. He was

taking keen interest in the working of the Centenary Committee. With deep concern, he conveyed to us that Rashtrapatiiji would not be able to preside over the next morning's function at the Central Hall of Parliament. I rang up the Appointments Secretary at the Rashtrapati Bhavan and pleaded for an urgent appointment with Rashtrapati Reddy. With some difficulty, time was given for me to meet Rashtrapati Reddy at 7.30 pm the same day i.e. August 20, 1988.

With trepidation I met him. He warmly received me and at once put me at ease by affectionately telling me "You are not to blame". However, he politely but firmly said he could not change his decision. Sensing my anguish, he said : "The Speaker is the custodian of the Parliament House. I cannot go there without an 'official' invitation from the Speaker. Very sorry". Posthaste I rushed to the chamber of Speaker Hegde at the Parliament House and told him about the unexpected, unfortunate turn of events. Speaker Hegde regretted "the technical lapse" on his part in not strictly following the established convention, propriety and protocol of the Speaker "officially" inviting the President "in writing".

Speaker Hegde instantly got an

official request typed out and he and I hurriedly drove to the Rashtrapati Bhavan and met Rashtrapatiiji at 9.30 p.m. Speaker Hegde apologetically handed over the sealed invitation. He opened and read the letter and remarked: "Good. Speaker Hegde, all of us occupying high public offices are birds of passage, temporary incumbents. We should scrupulously avoid even technical lapses in observance of time-honoured conventions, propriety and protocol. This is essential for the healthy growth of the fragile democracy of the vast subcontinent that is India. Otherwise the sheen and dignity of the infant democracy of Free India will get dimmed and it will get derailed. Democracy will tend to become mobocracy".

The next morning i.e. at 10.00 am on August 21, 1981, the unveiling ceremony was held in the central hall packed to capacity. All is well that ends well.

Some other not so widely known instances, showing Dr. Sanjiva Reddy's concern for democratic conventions, his innate humane and human qualities, simple living and high thinking, I hope to be able to touch upon in another issue. (*The facsimiles are from 'From Farm House to Rashtrapati Bhavan'*)

April 19, 1966.

My dear Smt. Indiraji,

As per the decision taken by the Cabinet in 1964, I am herewith enclosing the annual statement of properties in the name of myself, my wife and my son. I have no shares or interests in any Business Concern, Limited or Unlimited. I had also sent statements of my properties to the late Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on 29-6-1960 and to late Sri Lal Bahadurji on 20-11-1964.

Yours sincerely,

(N. Sanjiva Reddy)

*Smt. Indira Gandhi,
Prime Minister of India,
New Delhi.*

**STATEMENT OF MOVABLE AND IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES
OF SRI N. SANJIVA REDDY, SMT. SANJIVA REDDY &
THEIR SON, SUDHIR.**

....

PROPERTY IN THE NAME OF SRI N. SANJIVA REDDY:

I. IMMOVABLE.

1. (A) Irrigated Land ... 25 acres
- (B) Gardens - Mango, Coconut
(Well irrigated) ... 20 acres
- (C) Dry land entirely dependant
on rain ... 60 to 65 acres
- (D) Uncultivated land for grazing
of cattle, etc. ... 30 acres
- (E) 2 acres and 29 cents of land which is useful for house sites
in Anantapur Town within Municipal limits.
- ✓ (F) 5 acres of land near Anantapur Town.

(NOTE: Except the last item (F) which was given to me
by the Madras Govt. in the year 1947 as a Political
Sufferer, the rest of the property is ancestral
property)

2. A residential house in Antapur (Rumnagar Cooperative House Building
Society)
3. A farm house in village Illur in Antapur Taluq with Cattle Shed
and Grain Storage attached.

II. MOVABLE.

1. Cattle -- 3 pairs of Bulls, a few Cows and Buffaloes.
2. Agricultural implements, stock of grain or seed, etc. and cash
advances to Kisans round about Rs.4,000/-
3. A share in the Anantapur Dt. Cooperative Bank to the value of Rs.50/-
4. A share in the Rural Bank to the value of Rs.250/-.
5. Jewellery with the family costing roughly Rs.5,000/-.
6. Cash amount in Banks at Delhi, Hyderabad and ~~Anantapur~~
Anantapur -- About Rs.30,000/-.
7. A Fiat car.

LIABILITIES:

1. Rs.8,000/- Loan from the Govt. for the purchase of a Fiat car which I am repaying in instalments.

P.t.O. ...

: 2 :

PROPERTY IN THE NAME OF SMT. SANJIYA REDDY:

I. IMMOVABLE:

1. Two house sites, I am told, are left in her name along with other brothers and sisters by her father before his death.
2. The house allotted by the Housing Board, Hyderabad, was given up by her and she has taken the amount back and put it in a Fixed Deposit in the State Bank of India. (Amount of the Fixed Deposit-- Rs.15,000/-).

II. MOVABLE:

1. Jewellery costing Rs.5,000/- given to her by her father at the time of our marriage thirty years ago.
2. About Rs.10,000/- in cash.

PROPERTY IN THE NAME OF MR. SUDHIR:

My son, Sudhir, who is a Medical student, has no immovable property in his name till now. But, since he is a major now, I now propose transferring his share in his name.

October 11, 1981.

I received your letter of September 19th. I am writing to you again because I feel that the purpose of my writing to you has not been appreciated.

I am aware about the contribution of your grandfather and father to the cause of India's independence, who under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, along with men like Sardar Patel, Rajaji, Rajen Babu and Subhash Chandra Bose, gave up lucrative careers and joined the freedom struggle. The place your family has in the country's recent history is very well known. We should also not forget men like Prakasam, who had given up his flourishing practice at the bar to join the non cooperation movement and thousands of unknown men and women all over the country but for whose wholehearted participation in the freedom struggle, in response to Gandhiji's call, the country might not have achieved independence at all. Many of them had to sell their properties to support themselves and their families; not only had they to undergo privation in their life time but their families are now living in penury. On the other hand some of us who are living today have the good fortune of reaping the benefit of their sacrifice.

I shall now revert to the theme of my letter. What I meant to convey was that corruption has permeated our public life; indiscriminate collection of funds ostensibly for party / charitable purposes by men in authority has become so common that it has begun to be looked upon almost as their 'legitimate' pursuit; unless something is done to put an end to it, atleast now, there will be a total collapse of all moral values. No where did I suggest in my letter that a single party or a single individual is to blame for this state of affairs. I may say here that I had occasion to write to Shri Morarji Desai, who was the Prime Minister during the Janata Party's Government too on the subject. The parties may accuse one another of corruption but as I have said in my earlier letter, the country is not interested in such debate

but would like all of them to work sincerely and bring about a changed, cleaner public life.


I do not for a moment suggest that the country was free from corruption in the past but I can say with confidence that during the past 10 or 15 years, it has grown in depth and dimension. The public will not agree that its magnitude is being exaggerated because they know from their own daily experience, how far and how deep the malady has spread.

You have referred to your attempts during your previous regime to deal "firmly though quietly with the vexing question of corruption". You have added "we have succeeded in curbing corruption". I am glad you are able to look back with satisfaction on your efforts.

Your party has a comfortable majority in Parliament and your party men run the Government in most States with equally comfortable majorities in their respective legislatures. You are thus in a strong, unassailable position, a fact acknowledged even by the opposition groups. The comfortable position your party enjoys should be used to fight this evil and to put an end to it. You are in a position to control and direct the country's affairs. You should make full use of your invulnerable position to bring about a marked improvement in administration and in the quality of public life.

As you have recently reaffirmed your determination in the Lok Sabha to maintain high standards of integrity in administration, I hope you will soon initiate effective steps to deal with this matter. You will earn for yourself a worthy place in history, if you succeed in raising the standards of our public life. It is my earnest prayer that you may succeed in your efforts.

Yours sincerely,


(N. SANJIVA REDDY)

Shrimati Indira Gandhi,
Prime Minister of India,
NEW DELHI.

CONFIDENTIAL.

26th December, 1981.

The President has felt for some time that important events and developments in the country and abroad come to his notice only through newspapers. For example, the recent visit of the Secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs to China for discussions with Chinese officials was known to the President only through newspapers. The President is not aware as to what exactly happened during those discussions. Another instance is Pakistan's reported offer of 'No War Pact' with India which has been very much in the news of late. The President saw in the newspapers that our Ambassador to that country had been recently in Delhi for discussions. Apart from what appeared in the Press the President has no knowledge of these developments and of the Government's thinking in regard to these matters.

2. The President is aware that it is for the Ministers and the Council of Ministers to formulate policies and to take decisions. Nevertheless, he considers it necessary for him to be briefed fully about all important developments.

3. The President would like the Prime Minister to consider how best the President could be kept promptly informed of important events and developments and of Government's thinking on them and to evolve a suitable arrangement for the purpose.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

ml

(V.K. RAO)

Shri P. C. Alexander,
Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister,
Prime Minister's Secretariat.
NEW DELHI.

CONFIDENTIAL

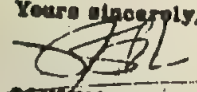
23rd October, 1980.

When I returned from foreign tour on 13th October, the Chief of Air Staff was not present at the Airport. This was inspite of the intimation sent well in advance to all concerned by the Chief of Protocol, regarding the dates of my departure and arrival. I consider this an act of gross indiscipline inasmuch as this Officer has shown disrespect to the Supreme Commander of Defence Forces, provided for in the Constitution.

I know that you attach considerable importance to matters of propriety and protocol. Inspite of your preoccupations you found time to personally come over to the Airport at the time of my departure and arrival, which I greatly appreciated. The Vice-President, Members of the Cabinet and other Senior Officers were also present. In this context, the absence of the Chief of Air Staff is all the more significant and unpardonable.

May I request you to call for this Officer's explanation for the serious lapse, take suitable action and also keep me informed.

Yours sincerely,


(N. SANJIVA REDDY)

Shrimati Indira Gandhi,
Prime Minister
NEW DELHI.



SECRET

PRIME MINISTER

New Delhi
November 7, 1980

Dear Rashtrapatiji,

I have your letter of the 23rd October.
I fully agree that propriety and protocol must be observed on all occasions, particularly when it applies to the President of the Republic of India and that no disrespect must be shown to our President in any circumstances.

As regards the incident mentioned in your letter, I believe the Chief of Air Staff has already called on you and has expressed his regrets about his absence at the Reception on your arrival from tour abroad. I trust that in these circumstances you will agree that the matter may be treated as closed.

Yours sincerely,

Indira Gandhi
(Indira Gandhi)

Shri N. Sanjiva Reddy,
President of India,
New Delhi.

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स लिलङ्घयिषुर्भीमं सलीलं लवणार्णवम् ।
कल्लोलास्फालवेलान्तमुत्पपात नभो हरिः ।
निपपात महेन्द्रस्य शिखरे पादपाकुले ॥

*Sa Lilanghayishurbheemam Saleelam Lavanaarnavam
Kallolaasphaalavelaantamutpapaata Nabho Harih
Nipapaata Mahendrasya Shikhare Paadapaakule*

Desirous of crossing over the terrible salty ocean full of waves as if in sport, the monkey rose up in the sky and came down on the top of the Mahendra mountain, crowded with trees.

ततस्ते प्रीतमनसः सर्वे वानरपुङ्गवाः ।
हनुमन्तं महात्मानं परिवार्योपतस्थिरे ॥

*Tataste Preetamanasah Sarve Vaanarapungavaah
Hanumantam Mahaatmaanam Parivaaryopatasthire*

Then, all the mighty monkeys stood round the high
souled Hanuman, with their hearts rejoicing.

प्रहृष्टवदनाः सर्वे तमरोगमुपागतम् ।
उपायनानि चादाय मूलानि च फलानि च ।
प्रत्यर्चयन् हरिश्रेष्ठं हरयो मारुतात्मजम् ॥

*Prahrushtavadanaah Sarve Tamarogamupaagatam
Upaayanaani Chaadaaya Moolaani Cha Phalaani Cha
Pratyarchayan Harisreshtam Harayo Maarutaatmajam*

All the monkeys, with pleased countenances,
welcomed Hanuman, the foremost of monkeys,
who had returned unscathed, with various kinds of
offerings of roots and fruits.

हनुमांस्तु गुरून् वृद्धान् जाम्बवत्प्रमुखांस्तदा ।
कुमारमङ्गदं चैव सोऽवन्दत महाकपिः ॥

*Hanumaamstu Guruun Vruddhaan Jaambavatpramukhaamstadaa
Kumaaramangadam Chaiva Soavandata Mahakapih*

And Hanuman, the great monkey, paid obeisance
to all his elders and teachers like Jambavan, and
to Prince Angada.

हनुमानब्रवीद्धृष्टस्तदा तान् वानरर्षभान् ॥

Hanumaanabraveeddhrushtastadaa Taan Vaanararshabhaan

Then Hanuman, highly satisfied, said to those
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Dr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy

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H.D. Deve Gowda,
Prime Minister of India

development. He was not only a progressive administrator but also an extraordinarily sensitive politician. He was a mass leader and was deeply committed to high standards in public life.

He served the country in several capacities starting as a Member of the Madras Legislative Assembly

In the demise of Dr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy, the nation has lost an eminent freedom fighter, an able administrator, a clean politician and an elder statesman. He sacrificed almost everything during the freedom struggle including his higher education by responding to the clarion call of Mahatma Gandhi by taking the plunge into the freedom struggle early in his youth and spent several years in jail. He was from a farming family. By sheer dint of sacrifice, hard work and merit, he became the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. As Chief Minister, he took the initiative in launching many projects which later led to accelerated agricultural



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and the Constituent Assembly of India, as Minister in Madras State and Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. He was a Member in the Cabinet formed by Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri and later in the Cabinet of Shrimati Indira Gandhi. As an able administrator, he provided mature guidance to several Ministries in the Central Government. It was a tribute to his parliamentary skill that he was elected Speaker of the Lok Sabha, a position that won him wide acclaim. It was a tribute to his genius that he was again elected unanimously the

Speaker of the Lok Sabha in March, 1977 and then went on to be elected unanimously to the highest office of the land.

I had the fortune of knowing him closely for several years. I also had the opportunity of interacting closely with him during his last years when he made Bangalore his home. As I speak about him today, many of these memories of my association with him are crowding in. Public life of India is the poorer by his departure, but he will always remain one of the prime examples of public life for all of us to emulate.

(Speech in Parliament on June 10, 1996)

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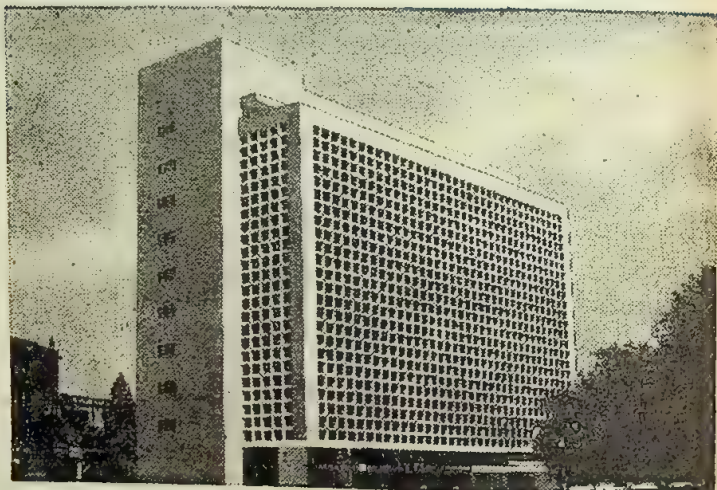
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Dr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy

I am particularly grieved at the loss of Dr. Sanjiva Reddy. Apart from his services to the country as a freedom fighter and holder of several positions of eminence and responsibility, I have a whole chapter which is connected with my personal relationship with him. I owe many of the things in my life to him. He gave my first break as a Minister in his Council of Ministers in 1962. He was extremely kind to me and appreciative of whatever good work I did, whenever I did a good work. I remember many, many, anecdotes to prove this point. He held me in great affection. He made me the representative of his own district Anantapur, which all of us know is one of the least developed districts,

JULY 31, 1996

A Personal Loss

P.V. Narasimha Rao

President

Indian National Congress

in the country. He often used to say about the River Pennar, which flows through Anantapur, 'what flows in this river is sand and not water'. He had many such light-hearted jokes to describe the indescribable poverty in Anantapur. I was fortunate to formulate some of the schemes in Anantapur, which have taken decades and decades. Some of them, actually, are fructifying now. And, whenever I happened to meet Dr. Sanjiva Reddy in Bangalore, he



P.V. Narasimha Rao

always reminded me of what I had done as a Minister in his Cabinet and what I had been doing decade after decade since then.

He was a very honest man. His honesty was almost proverbial in the South of India. One of the anecdotes which was true, absolutely true, in every word, relates to the period when he was the PWD Minister in the old Madras State. One gentleman went to him with a letter from one of his-Dr. Sanjiva Reddy's - very, very dear friends. He took the letter. He did not open it. He only said, 'I understand what this letter contains. I know you are a contractor. Either take the letter back for your own safety or if you want me to open it, you run the risk of my going against you merely because you have brought a recommendation here'. The man without any demur took it back. This anecdote, true anecdote, has been known to many people in the South, MLAs and others. If he considered something to be right, he would make no compromise.

He was the Congress President also. Perhaps, this was a very trying moment for him because the Prime Minister was Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. To act as a Congress President, when Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was at the other end, towering over everything in the

country and the Congress was a real job. I can say without fear of contradiction that Dr. Sanjiva Reddy rose to the occasion and became a leader in his own right, not necessarily opposed to the Prime Minister, a leader along with the Prime Minister, but not a subordinate to him.

As the President of India, he showed that he need not necessarily and without demur sign on the dotted line. He had the courage to say that in his opinion what was being proposed by the Cabinet did not appear to be correct. He would ask the Cabinet to have another look at it. And in most of these matters I happened to be the intermediary. So, I know how things went. On the other side was Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister. I was a Minister in her Cabinet. So, these happenings, these events, these nuances which perhaps do not have any place in the pages of history, are known only to those who went through these nuances and very minutely studied them. I happened to be one of them and I feel blessed by these experiences and I would say that, personally, I would call this a loss to me personally and in me I find something missing by the demise of Dr. Sanjiva Reddy.

Whenever I went to Bangalore, I made it a point to meet him. And he went over the entire scenario.

He was interested even in the minute things happening anywhere in the country and in the world. When I became Foreign Minister, he was very deeply interested in foreign affairs. I used to explain our

policies and he with his sturdy commonsense gave suggestions which had not occurred to the Ministry of External Affairs. So we were greatly profited by his advice.

(Speech made in the Lok Sabha on June 10, 1996)

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Dr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy

An illustrious son of India, Dr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy was one of the veterans of India's struggle for freedom and a leading light in the country's socio-political life for more than half a century. He took part in India's Freedom Movement and was imprisoned several times.

Dr. Reddy was actively associated with the political affairs of his home State, Andhra Pradesh since 1931. He was Member of Madras Legislative Assembly in 1946 and Constituent Assembly of India in 1947. He served as Minister in the State Government of Madras during 1949-51 and held various

Gem of A Person

P.A. Sangma

Speaker, Lok Sabha

important portfolios. Thereafter he served Andhra Pradesh as Deputy Chief Minister in 1953 and later as Chief Minister during 1956 and again in 1962-64. He also served as Minister of Steel and Mines, Transport, Aviation, Shipping and Tourism in the Union Council of Ministers during 1964-67.

Dr. Reddy, a conscientious parliamentarian of high standing,



P. A. Sangma

was Member of Rajya Sabha in 1952 and 1964 to 67 and was later elected to the Fourth Lok Sabha in 1967 and was elected to the Office of Speaker, Lok Sabha and continued to hold that office till 1969. He was deeply devoted to Parliamentary institutions and made a very distinguished contribution as Presiding Officer by way of decisions and rulings from the Chair.

A widely travelled person, he headed many Parliamentary delegations to various countries. He was again elected to the Sixth Lok Sabha in 1977 and re-elected Speaker of the Sixth Lok Sabha during the same year. However, he was destined to have greater attainments.

In July, 1977, on his being chosen as the President of India, his long and illustrious public career reached its zenith. Through his administrative acumen, he added dignity to this office. A man who rose from humble beginnings, he displayed throughout his public life

an abiding commitment to the welfare of the people. His skill in handling the tortuous political and administrative situations of the time is an ample testimony of his innate qualities, astuteness and equipoise in moments of stress and crisis.

His amiable disposition and genial informality earned him accolades. Even after he retired from the august Office of the President of India, his sage counsel served as a beacon in the troubled times.

His name will ever remain inscribed in the annals of India's parliamentary and political history.

Dr. Reddy passed away at Bangalore on June 1, 1996 at 83. In his death, the nation has been deprived of a statesman of rare quality, a veteran freedom fighter, true democrat, able parliamentarian and, above all, a gem of a person. Though Dr. Reddy is no longer in our midst, his memories will be with us for many years to come.

(Speech in the Lok Sabha on June 10, 1996)

As Speaker & President

Atal Behari Vajpayee



Dr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy

An age has ended with the death of Dr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy, a link connecting the present to the past has snapped. A notable person has departed. Village born, a peasants son, he flung himself

into the struggle for freedom. He was jailed many times and when the nation attained freedom, he played a significant part in nation-building. He was a member of the Constituent Assembly. He was in the Lok Sabha. He was in the Rajya



Atal Behari Vajpayee

Sabha. In each of them he left his mark. His rough exterior hid an affectionate heart. Twice he was the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. In one of his tenures I was in the Opposition and in the other on the ruling side. To control the house he did not very much rely on the rules, regulations and traditions, but depended more on common sense and his skill in persuading everyone to go along with him, despite his knowledge of constitutional niceties.

One may agree that he could not be compared to Vithalbhai Patel or Mavalankarji, but the Speaker has to manage the Lok Sabha with the co-operation of all. This we saw him doing.

I had an opportunity of going abroad with him. On one occasion the courtesy extended to our delegation left much to be desired. India is the world's largest democracy and when we go abroad as a parliamentary delegation, we go as representatives of the whole nation. Dr. Reddy was our leader

on that occasion. Without displeasing the hosts, he made them realise the deficiency.

In recognition of his life-long services to the nation, a grateful country made him its President. He could have been elected to this office earlier; earlier than 1977. I do not wish to enter into a debate on that. But the clock's hand turned a full circle when he adorned the office of the President.

In those days I happened to observe him while on a visit to a village in Gonda, U.P. It was a meeting of the poor. Peasants and farmers had gathered. He was the chief guest. In that large gathering of village folk, Dr. Reddy touched everyone's heart when he insisted that he would eat his lunch sitting on the ground and along with the farmers.

As President we had criticised a few of his rulings, but our respect for him remained the same. His demise has left a large gap in our political life.

(Speech in Hindi made in Parliament on June 10, 1996)



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A Man With A Tender Heart

Surjeet Singh Barnala, M.P.

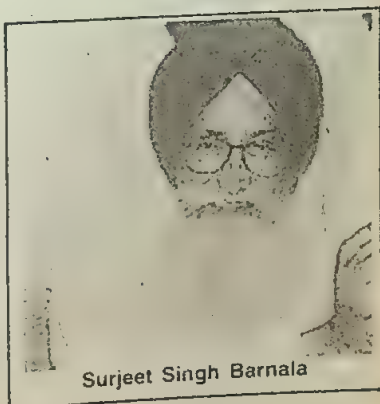


Dr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy

I had occasion to work with Dr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy for some time. He was born in a farming family; and he remained a farmer throughout his life, at heart. Whenever I had an opportunity of meeting him, he would talk of agriculture and of farming—that showed his interest. I thought that it was because of the Department that I was handling at that time that he was asking me.

But it was not so. He had the interest of the farmers at heart. He rose to eminent positions because he loved his people, he served them well and the people also loved him.

He became a Member of the A.P. Legislative Assembly. Again and again, he was elected to the Assembly; he became a Minister, he became the Chief Minister. Then he was elected to the Parliament by the same people, not just once, but many times. He became a Minister here and later Speaker. He very ably handled all situations.



Surjeet Singh Barnala



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In 1977, I was attending a FAO Conference in Rome when I received a message that there had been a very severe cyclone in the coastal areas of Andhra Pradesh. And there had been a very heavy loss of life. I immediately came back and when I reached Delhi, I received a message that the President was visiting that area and I was to accompany him. So, I accompanied Sanjiva Reddyji to the coastal areas. We had to go there many miles by road and the sight was so distressing. Human corpses and animal carcasses were lying all along the road, and littered in the fields. We even saw some dead bodies hanging from the electric lines about ten feet high from the ground. Water had risen so high in that area; sea had encroached the land for about twenty kilometres and then receded. So, there was a great loss of life; There were some gatherings and camps being organised at that time. We visited one of the camps and saw men, women and children almost naked; some women were half-naked and starving. He had tears in his eyes

and told me, "Mr. Barnala, can you do something for them, some clothing and food?" I replied that by evening everything would be supplied and the next day, when I told him that supplies of clothes and food had been arranged for that area, he was very happy. He was tender at heart, and I saw his eyes filled with tears. A person with such an exalted position showed that he had a tender heart, heart which bled for the people and cared for the people.

A time came later when Choudhary Charan Singh resigned after some time. There was 'no confidence motion' in the House. A few days after that, Dr. Sanjiva Reddy called me to the Rashtrapati Bhavan and told me that he had an idea of having an interim national government and then surprisingly, he told that it was to be headed by me. I thanked him and told that I was not worthy of it and asked him as to why did he think of me. Then he said, "I know some qualities which others do not have and which you have."

(Speech made in Parliament on June 10, 1996)



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Dr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy

Sanjiva Reddy was one of my close friends. I came to know him first when he was a Minister in the Prakasam Cabinet and then as Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. One thing that distinguished him from many others was the way in which he resigned his Chief Ministership following a High Court judgement. I know that he was not to blame. He acted like Lal Bahadur Shastri who resigned his Railway Ministership after a rail accident in Tamil Nadu. These friends were of the real stuff that made a man and a minister worth remembering and worthy of respect, regard and admiration.

Sanjiva Reddy, as was the case with Congressmen in those days,

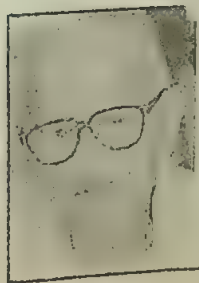
Sanjiva Reddy As I Know Him

S. Nijalingappa

had undergone suffering and sacrifice.

We three, Kamaraj, Sanjiva Reddy and myself, were at the same time Presidents of Tamil Nadu, Andhra and Karnataka States respectively and we worked together.

We were known as the triumvirate of the Congress and I



S. Nijalingappa

have a feeling that even Pandit Nehru had noted it. He first made Sanjiva Reddy President of the Congress. Reddy was quite effective.

He was subsequently elected to the Lok Sabha and became a Minister holding various responsible portfolios in the Central Government under Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi. When in 1967, though elected to the Lok Sabha, he was not appointed as minister, I was then responsible to have him nominated to the Speakership of the Lok Sabha and have him elected. I need not go into the details of his election to the Speakership. He proved to be one of the most effective and impartial Speakers who commanded respect from all sections of the house.

Subsequently, though nominated as candidate for the Presidentship of India, after he was requested to resign from the Speakership, he was defeated in that election due to the mis-behaviour and misconduct of the very people who nominated him. I do not want to go in to the details or circumstances that led to that defeat. But he was unanimously elected to the same high office in 1977.

He was a man among men. He

was a freedom-fighter, a patriot, an able administrator and a Speaker par excellence and a good President, too. He was out-spoken, sincere and earnest, never minced matters, was frank and honest in that all he did. He never swerved from the correct path whatever be the consequences.

On only one thing I did not agree with him - his decision as President of India to dissolve the Lok Sabha resulting in the resignation of the Morarji Desai Ministry.

His family life was one of happiness and contentment. He was a loving husband and a loving father. He and his wife were a rare, happy couple. They were charming hosts. I was happy to go to them and enjoy their hospitality. She knew that I liked a particular preparation and whenever I went to their house, in Delhi or Bangalore, she was ready with it and I immensely enjoyed it. I can never forget those moments of delight.

He was 10 years junior to me and when I heard of his passing away, I felt that I had lost a dear brother. The country has lost a great servant and a great leader and our Bhavan a true friend and well-wisher who must be remembered with respect and regard.

Shri Neelam Sanjiva Reddy

- Some Personal Memories

S.L. Shakdher★



Dr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy

After the General Elections to Lok Sabha in 1967, the then Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi, did not include Shri Neelam Sanjiva Reddy in her

Cabinet. At the instance of Shri K. Kamaraj, the then President of the Congress Party, she decided to nominate him as a candidate for the Office of Speaker, Lok Sabha. Before Shri Reddy could



Shri S. L. Shakdher

★ Shri Shakdher was a former Chief Election Commissioner of India. He is the Chairman of Bhavan's New Delhi Kendra.

give his consent, he wanted to consult me on this offer.

I was then the Secretary of Lok Sabha. This was our first meeting face to face on a very delicate and important issue. He said he wanted to ask me what he should do, and did not want to consult anybody — politician, friend or relation. He explained that he was not well up in constitutional or procedural matters and felt uneasy to accept the offer. I told him that for a Speaker to be successful it was essential that he commanded the respect of M.Ps and people in general and had a reputation that once he had given a decision, he would not go back on it, come what may. But to arrive at that decision, he had to be careful to weigh all sides of the problem. I further said that in a morning meeting between the Speaker and Secretary all the aspects of the problems that were likely to arise during the day and possible solutions would be thoroughly discussed and it may be easy for the Speaker to handle most of these in the House. But in a case where the Speaker was not sure, he should desist from giving his ruling and hear everybody on all shades of opinion and reserve his ruling, so that the matter could be discussed thoroughly and a firm ruling given later. Shri Reddy was temperamentally suited to this kind

of Office and I must say that he adhered to the advice all through his term as Speaker. He became known as a great and efficient Speaker.

Mr. Speaker had a fund of commonsense and humour. One day in the House, Shri Madhu Limaye, a very active and prominent Member of Parliament, argued against the admission of a motion, and quoted my book in support of his argument. Shri Reddy heard him patiently and said "Mr. Madhu Limaye has quoted Mr. Shakhder's book but it is he who had advised me to admit the motion. Shall I go by his book or by his advice". The House laughed and the objection was over-ruled.

To be a perfect Speaker, one has not only to be impartial but seem to be impartial. Shri Reddy exhibited this quality adequately e.g. in calling members of all parties and groups to speak in a debate, giving them proportionate time and in selecting M.Ps to various Committees and in delegations going abroad. He believed in consultation with leaders of parties in important matters before taking a decision. As a first proof that he intended to be impartial in his functions as Speaker, Shri Reddy declared in his speech on election to the office of Speaker that he had resigned from Congress Party. He was the first

Speaker to do so in independent India.

It is the job of the Speaker to ensure that the house functions in an efficient manner and secure the accountability of Government to it. He was the first Speaker to appoint a member of the Opposition to the office of the Chairman of Public Accounts Committee, which is an important and powerful committee of the House. Till then it was always held by a member of the ruling party.

On the eve of his election to the office of the Speaker a rumour was spread that Shri Reddy, if elected to the office of the Speaker, would be inimical to the Prime Minister and the Congress Party. So, although Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had proposed his nomination, she called him to her office on the morning of the voting on the motion, to suggest that he should withdraw from the contest. Shri Reddy promptly replied to her that it was too late for her to suggest this and if she had any reservations to his nomination, she should ask her party to vote it down. The Prime Minister must have thought twice about it because the motion was carried unanimously. The misgivings of the Party may have remained, but **Shri Reddy never deviated from the path of impartiality in his decisions.** Whenever the Congress or Prime Minister had a

case, he upheld it vigorously, even though Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia being opposed to Indira Gandhi formally sought through many devices to embarrass her - such as the famous Mink Coat matter.

Shri Reddy and I had several occasions to travel abroad. He was a delightful companion, undemanding, versatile in conversation with dignitaries such as Presidents, Prime Ministers, Speakers, Ministers and other high personages. He could talk on all subjects with knowledge of facts and explain nicely and convincingly our policies on various issues. He made a mark at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conferences and Inter-Parliamentary union meetings and represented India with dignity and spread charm and grace all round.

Speaker & Secretary

The relationship between the Speaker and Secretary of the House is delicate and based on mutual trust and respect. One advises and the other decides. Most of our work was conducted by oral discussion, in which opinions were freely and frankly expressed. This presupposes that the information and facts known to one of us should be truthfully shared with the other so that a correct and complete assessment of the situation is made

and decision arrived at. There is no question of such decisions taking place on files or on written notes as sensitive political overtones are involved in all parliamentary matters. **The House is not a Law Court where matters are decided on strict interpretation of Law and narrow meanings. The House is primarily a political body and there is no bar on expression of political opinions, which may be in conflict with legal opinions.** We had a complete rapport between us all through and never was one let down by the other.

Presidential Election

In 1969, when Shri Reddy stood for election to the Office of President of India, I was appointed as Returning Officer for this election. Prior to his nomination by the Congress Party as their candidate, there was a good deal of political activity. Incidentally, on the death of Dr. Zakir Hussein, it was Indira Gandhi who had encouraged Shri Reddy to stand as a candidate, because, as it transpired later, her plan was to oust all other prominent leaders from proposing their own names. Actually, it was her desire to nominate someone else and ask Shri Reddy to step down. But her plans went awry as the Congress Working Committee was divided on the issue. The majority favoured Shri

Reddy and she, in a minority, proposed the name of Shri Jagjivan Ram. The majority carried the day. Shrimati Indira Gandhi then proposed his name and submitted the nomination paper before me. After sometime she changed her mind and directed Congress Party members to vote according to their conscience. The result was that Shri Reddy lost by a narrow margin. However our relationship was so deep that he kept me informed of all intimate conversations with the Prime Minister and other leaders from day to day. This revealed to both of us the working of minds of people at the helm of affairs on such delicate and sensitive issues and how the concerned people changed opinions and loyalties constantly.

However, eight years after this event, in 1977, Shri Reddy was again a candidate for the office of President of India on behalf of the Janata Party, which was in power, and I was then the Chief Election Commissioner of India. The election was conducted under my supervision and this time he became the President of India. Our mutual relationship, which had been built over the years remained steady and got strengthened as days passed by. Destiny brought us together again to play complementary role in the national affairs.

Shri Charan Singh as P.M.

In 1979 Janata Party split and Morarji Desai Government resigned. The President had to decide whom to call to form the new Government. During those days there was hectic activity and many leaders were interacting with the President as to what should be done. One morning he called me and told me that he had been greatly disturbed at the complicated situation that had arisen and by the contradictory information and advice that he had received. He wanted to discuss the whole matter with me and arrive at a good decision. We exchanged all information as was our custom and listed the possible solutions. We came to the conclusion that one of the two leaders Shri Jagjivan Ram or Shri Charan Singh should be invited to form the Government for the time being and the House dissolved. He further asked me how long it would take to get the new house elected. I, as Chief Election Commissioner, advised him that it would take six months to get the electoral rolls brought up-to-date and to make arrangements for election. He noted both points. After I had left, he called Shri Charan Singh to form the Government.

Shri Jagjivan Ram came later to see him and requested him to give

him time to file a list of members who were supporting him to show that he had the majority of members with him. Shri Reddy forgot momentarily that he was President and he had to be formal on such occasions. Shri Reddy did not object to this and did not inform him that he had already asked Shri Charan Singh to form the Government. But soon after Shri Jagjivan Ram went away, a communique was issued that Shri Charan Singh had been offered Prime Ministership. There was great uproar in Jagjivan Ram Camp and they alleged that President Reddy had betrayed them. I was unaware of this.

The same night I was to appear on TV to indicate when election would be held and what arrangements were being made. It was a live telecast at 9.30 PM. Shri Jagjivan Ram Camp had briefed the interviewer to ask me questions which would embarrass President Reddy. He asked whether I had met President that morning and when. I said I had seen the President in the morning. He then asked me to be specific about timings. This question made me alert and I sensed some mischief behind it. I said again 'in the morning'. Then he asked me whether he had informed me that he would dissolve the House. I said 'no'. Then he asked me what was my impression about



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his decision. I said I thought he was coming to that decision but we did not discuss this specifically. The President told me later that I had saved the situation for him; otherwise this could have embarrassed him.

Intimate Relationship

As President, he always gave me appointments, at the end of all his other engagements so that we had plenty of time to discuss points of mutual interest. I always wondered at our intimate relationship, for when he became Speaker, some senior officers of the Andhra Govt. and MPs advised me to be careful, for he was very vindictive, stern and conscious of his dignity. They said he would feel offended or insulted at the slightest pretext. But looking back at our relations from 1967 till his recent death, I have had not a single occasion to complain; which is remarkable indeed. In fact, this fact was very much in the mind of Smt. Indira Gandhi for she had suggested

to her Joint Secretary in the PMO that in case Shri Reddy was elected President in 1969, I should be made Secretary to the President so that the relations between the President and PM were smooth.

In 1981, when President Reddy was Chairman of the committee on Rajaji Birth Centenary, one of the proposals before the Committee was appointment of the Director of the Rajaji International Institute of Public Affairs. Shri L.K. Jha, the then Governor of Kashmir, was offered the post. President Reddy remarked in the Committee that after him I would be appointed as Director, because at the point I could not hold it as I was still holding the Office of the CEC. As luck would have it, Shri L.K. Jha did not join, and I had to shoulder the responsibility.

I held President Reddy in high esteem as a man of high integrity and tremendous commonsense, desirous of doing good to the country and people.

□□□

Dr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy Speaks At The Bhavan



Dr. Sanjiva Reddy, who was associated with the Bhavan for over 40 years, made it a point to participate in several of Bhavan's functions as Rashtrapati. The following is a list of such functions:-

1. December 27, 1978 - Inauguration of Bhubaneshwar Kendra

2. Nov 30, 1980 - Laying of the foundation stone for the Rs. 75 lakhs building complex of the Chandigarh Kendra.

3. Dec 6, 1980 - Laying of the foundation stone of the Rs. 2 crore building complex at Bidhan Nagar, Calcutta

4. Dec 19, 1980 - Becoming Honorary member of the Bhavan at a function at the Central Bhavan, Bombay

5. Sept 3, 1981 - Laying of the foundation stone of the Nagpur Kendra

Dr. Reddy unveiled a portrait of Rajaji (Shri C. Rajagopalachari, first and last Indian Governor-general of India) at the Central Hall of Parliament on Aug 21, 1978. The portrait was a gift of the Rajaji Centenary Committee sponsored by the Bhavan. Seven years after he had laid down office of President, Dr. Reddy inaugurated Bhavan's Tirupati Kendra on Aug 16, 1989.

In the following pages, we reproduce the full text of Dr. Reddy's Speech on the occasion of his accepting the Honorary Membership of the Bhavan. We also give brief summaries of his speeches he made at other Centres.

Bhavan, National Institution With An International Outlook

The following is the full text of Dr. Sanjiva Reddy's speech at the Central Bhavan on accepting its Honorary Membership (Dec 19, 1980)

I am happy to be here amidst you all today to receive the *Tamra Patra* of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. The earlier recipients of this honour were distinguished persons in their respective fields.

Perhaps this is for the first time that the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan has decided to honour a farmer. I deem this an honour done to the farmers of our country by choosing their representative for this purpose. I accordingly receive the *Tamra Patra* in that spirit.

Munshiji had conceived this Institution for enabling us to recapture and foster our fundamental values reintegrating them with new elements suited to modern conditions.

The record of Bhavan's achievements spreading over the last 42 years speaks volumes about

fulfilment of this objective. It has grown into a movement with diverse activities and its roots have struck deep into the soil, like a banyan tree, spreading its influence ever wider and wider.

The Bhavan has come to be recognised as a comprehensive national Institution with an International outlook serving the intellectual, literary, educational, cultural, scientific and spiritual life of India.

The Bhavan's ideal that the world is one family and its motto 'let noble thoughts come to us from every side' briefly sums up the essence of our ancient culture. We are expected to wish well and pray for the welfare of all and develop a universal outlook.

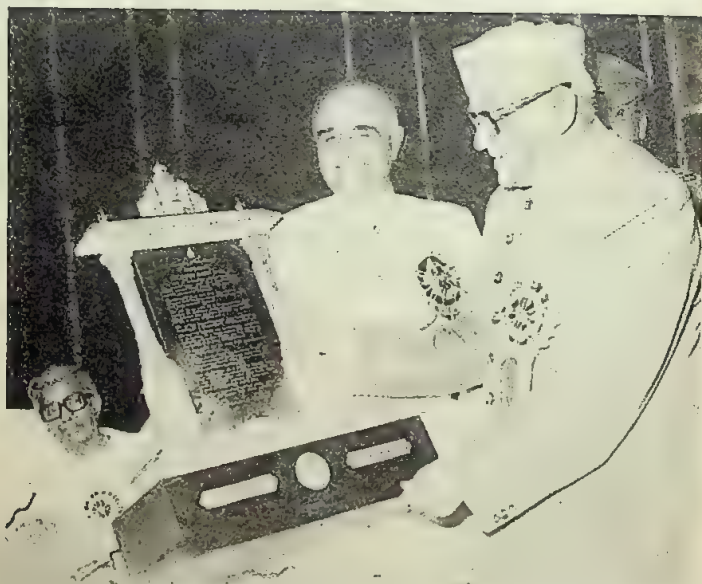
In the same way, keeping away from egoism, jealousy, hatred and anger, we should entertain good thoughts from all instead of adhering dogmatically to our own belief as the only true ones. Truth is not the monopoly of any one person or

organisation. This noble concept pervaded the thought and action of our elders throughout history.

The independence movement led by Gandhiji was based on these values, upheld and nurtured by an ancient tradition which has been a confluence of all faiths. It was this spirit of tolerance that sustained our secular approach. India enjoys a unique position among the nations

of the world, where religions from all corners of the world co-exist peacefully and flourish.

In our external relations too, we have been striving to follow the spirit of fairness to all. We had adhered steadfastly to cherished values rather than falling a prey to short-term material gains. This was the reason why non-alignment policy came naturally to us. The policies



Air Chief Marshal O. P. Mehra, the then Governor of Maharashtra, presenting the Tamra Patra conferring the Bhavan's Honorary Membership on Dr. Sanjiva Reddy on December 18, 1980. Also seen in the picture is Bhavan's President Shri C. Subramaniam.

we have pursued may not have yielded quick and spectacular results but these policies are durable and in tune with our inner thoughts.

In saying all this I am attempting to make the point that our cultural traditions have always formed the basis for all our internal and external policies. Naturally we would want these time-tested values and traditions to be preserved and spread among the younger generation and in all parts of the country.

This is a task of great magnitude and in this the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan is playing an important role through its network of branches in the country. I had the opportunity of laying the foundation stones of the Bhavan Kendras at Chandigarh and Calcutta recently.

In the present transformation of our country from an economically backward state into a modern society, the Bhavan should strive to see that in our march to modernity our spiritual base is not lost sight of or diluted.

The gulf between the urban and rural India seems to be widening, following the increasing disparities in incomes and standards of life. Nearly eighty per cent of our people

live in villages and any movement without involving them will not be complete.

I feel, therefore, that a time has come for the Bhavan to extend its activities and attention to the people in rural areas. Benefits of modern education are not available to the rural people and are beyond their reach also.

You can go out into the villages and open multipurpose schools, cultural centres and health units. Having honoured a farmer today, the Bhavan has committed itself to help the farmers' community in raising its quality of life.

Before concluding I would like to pay my humble tribute to the memory of the Bhavan's founder Kulapati Munshiji, who was a great Rishi. The best way to pay our homage to Munshiji is to work for the fulfilment of his ideals.

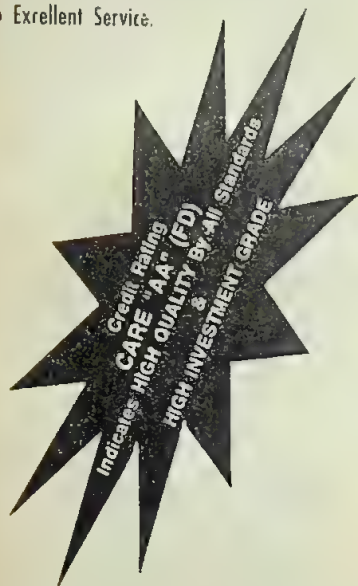
I would thank you, Shri Khatau, Shri Jaisukhlal Hathi, Shri Mehta and Shri Ramakrishnan for inviting me here. I wish the Bhavan all success and now as one of its honorary members, I shall strive further to help implement the ideals of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan."

Jai Hind

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Inaugurating the new building of Bhavan's Bhubaneswar Kendra on Dec. 27, 1978, Dr. Reddy recalled his past association with Kulapati Munshi, the founder of Bhavan. He made special mention of Munshi's love for tree planting. As an Agriculture minister, Shri Reddy said, "Vana Mahotsava", was Munshi's slogan. The President

went on to add that there would be no floods, if trees were planted. He narrated how the Himalayan ranges were being increasingly denuded of its flora. "If you cut away the trees, the first shower itself will take away the soil - that is how floods are increasing, that is how rivers are getting silted up. I am sure Munshi must have known about it in those days - 30 years ago - when he preached "Plant More Trees." "We did plant, but only did not see that they were grown," added the President.

The President said it was but appropriate that Bhubaneswar should have a kendra of the Bhavan. "It is not only because this happens to be a capital, but also because of the historical importance of this city and the state. I am glad that this centre here, ever since its establishment, has been rendering valuable service in the field of education and culture."

CHANDIGARH KENDRA

Laying the foundation stone of the Rs. 75 lakh building complex of the Chandigarh Kendra on Nov 30, 1980, Dr. Reddy described the Bhavan as a unique institution which had not gone down in status and glory with the death of its founder.

He praised the vision of Dr. Munshi who planned the institution in such a way that it would continue to grow even after his death.

Though neither Shantiniketan nor Sewagram were the same after the death of Tagore and Gandhi, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan was still growing and its activities were becoming manifold in India and abroad, observed the President.

Making an impassioned plea for the preservation of forests and the promotion of forestry, Dr. Reddy said that the late Dr. Munshi was a great



visionary who had understood the significance of forests more than three decades ago.

Referring to the donation of Rs. 5 lakhs each by the Punjab and Haryana Governments for the building, the President said that with the help of donations from the people of both States it would not take long to complete the building complex of the Chandigarh Kendra.

He also called for strengthening of the secular approach which enabled this ancient land to absorb all faiths.

Stating that spiritual values were extremely relevant today when the

world was witnessing a growing craze for material comforts and possessions he referred to Mahatma Gandhi who showed that any action not based firmly on fundamental spiritual values lost its power and effectiveness.

He added that in recent centuries India had given birth to great saints like Guru Nanak, Sant Kabirdas, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Ramana Maharshi and Swami Vivekananda who taught that divinity was indivisible and manifest in everyone. This was the true basis for compassion towards others.

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CALCUTTA KENDRA

Laying the foundation stone of the Bhavan's Rs. 2 crore building complex at Bidhan Nagar, Calcutta, on Dec 6, 1980, Dr. Reddy described Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan as a unique cultural and educational institution patronised by the people of the world and as the only institution which had grown with glory from year to year and has not disappeared after the death of its great founder.

The Bhavan's main objective of cultural reintegration of the Indian people in perfect synchronization with the continuously evolving patterns of knowledge and understanding should not only be preserved but also propagated throughout the world.

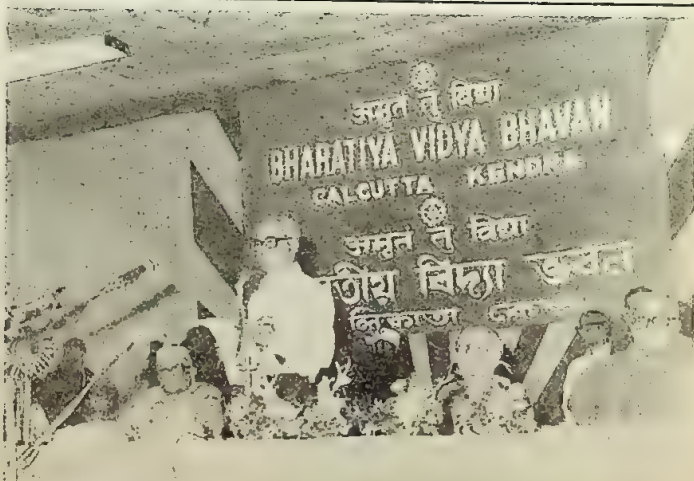
The President further observed that Calcutta pioneered and carried forward modern Indian renaissance beginning with Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Paramahansa Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, Gurudev Tagore, Mahayogi Aurobindo and a host of others in various spheres of national life and that it was in the fitness of things that Bhavan was establishing its Kendra in this eastern gateway of India. He paid high encomia to the various grades of talents available in the people of West Bengal. He observed that

society had many in-built 'time spanners' that helped to link the present generation with the past, and that Bhavan is perceived in the role of a 'time spanner' that not only draws upon the past to illuminate the present but also turns the 'time mirror' completely round — looking into the future unlike a gypsy engaged in crystal gazing — to acquire an insight into the changing patterns of thought. The President deplored that our planners had not envisioned a proper planning for the children who are the future architects of India's destiny and suggested that the Bhavan should take possible lead in this direction.

Nearly 2000 people witnessed the foundation stone laying ceremony by the President in a specially erected decorative pandal in the 5 acre site allotted by the Government of West Bengal at Bidhan Nagar, Sector III. The elite of Calcutta numbering nearly 800 was present at the function. Welcome arches put up in English, Hindi and Bengali greeted the President at the pandal. The Rashtrapati was received in the traditional Bengali way by arati and tilak.



Dr. Sanjiva Reddy arriving at the Bhavan's Bidhan Nagar Complex. On his left are Shri Girdharilal Mehta, President Emeritus of Bhavan, Shri T. N. Singh, then Governor of West Bengal, and Shri Prasant Sur, Urban Development Minister, West Bengal.



Shri Prasant Sur, Urban Development Minister, West Bengal, delivering the keynote address.

NAGPUR KENDRA

Laying the foundation stone for the new building of Bhavan's Nagpur Kendra and Bhagavandas Purohit Sabhagriha on September 3, 1981, Dr. Reddy said that the values which our forefathers not only cherished but which formed the very basis of their lives seemed no longer to have any meaning for us today. They believed that even in the pursuit of our worldly activities one cannot be oblivious to the basic principles of righteous conduct and that *Artha* has to be acquired only through *Dharma*. In contrast, there is today an all pervasive atmosphere of permissiveness. The end justified the means appears to be our guiding

principle today, observed the President. Gandhiji, to whose inspiring leadership the country owed its independence, had always stressed that means were as important as ends and that lasting good could be achieved only through fair means.

In this situation, those of us who had the benefit and the privilege of close association with Mahatmaji have a special responsibility in the pursuit of our aims. If we behave as if means do not matter, and believe that anything goes as long as the end is attained, we can hardly blame the younger generation for emulating us and excelling in cynical



President Sanjiva Reddy delivering the inaugural address. To his left are Shri S. Ramakrishnan, Shri S. K. Wankhede, Shri C. Subramaniam and Governor O. P. Mehra and on his right are Shri J. L. Hathi and Smt Ashadevi Maheshwari

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disregard for moral values, Shri Reddy continued.

He stressed the importance of the role that voluntary organisations like the Ramakrishna Mission and the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan can play in such a situation. There are many schools and colleges run by these institutions, but a distinguishing feature of the institutions run by Ramakrishna Mission and Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan is their endeavour not merely to impart formal education but to foster moral and spiritual values.

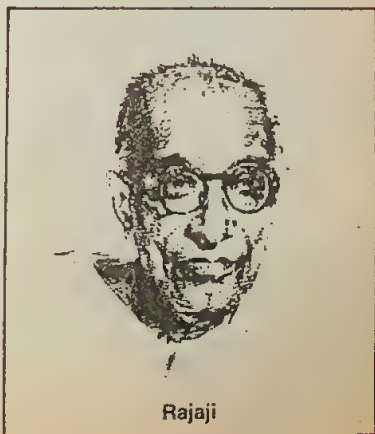
There is great need today to make the coming generation aware of the philosophical teachings of the world's spiritual leaders and it is here that the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and other similar organisations have a special role to play. It was heartening to observe that, by its numerous publications and through its educational institutions, the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan has, ever since its inception by Kulapati Munshi over four decades back, been making a valuable contribution to this end, the President concluded.

DELHI

Homage to Rajaji

Unveiling the portrait of Rajaji at the Central Hall of Parliament on Aug 21, 1978, Dr. Reddy recalled four decades of his association with Rajaji who was an intellectual giant, a man of courage and one whose honesty and integrity were unquestioned.

Dr. Reddy recollected when Rajaji had to be persuaded to take up the Chief Ministership of Madras for a second time. Rajaji fought for purity in public life, particularly against money power, which, he felt would destroy democracy.



Rajaji

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TIRUPATI KENDRA

Inaugurating Bhavan's Tirupati Kendra at the foot of Lord Venkateswara in Tirupati, the famed pilgrim town in Andhra Pradesh, on August 16, 1989, Dr. Sanjiva Reddy wished that another Gandhi was born to purge the nation of its ills.

Recalling his association with the stalwarts of the Freedom Movement who had sacrificed their everything for the nation, the former President said, their example should inspire the present-day leaders. "Today people are desirous of amassing wealth without caring for the means of acquiring it," Dr. Reddy said, expressing his sorrow over the decline of moral values.

Continuing in the same vein, he said that the high ethical principles practised by Gandhi, T. Prakasam, Rajaji and K. Kamaraj should serve as beacon—lights for others.

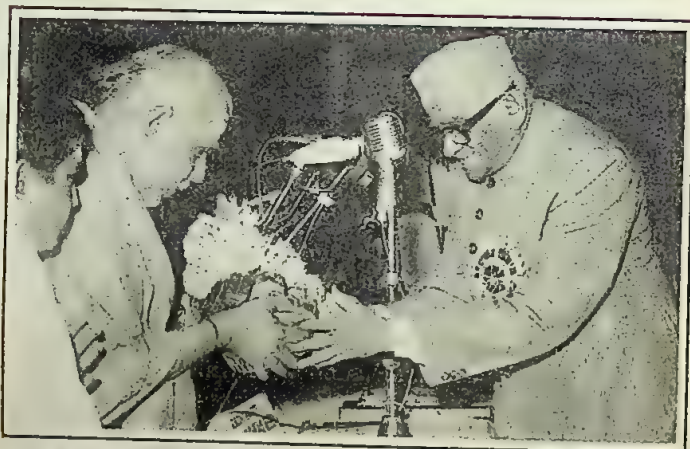
He feelingly referred to the passing away of Shri Kamaraj in a rented house. Shri Jayaprakash Narayan had refused Nehru's offer of ministership in the Union cabinet.

Shri Reddy hoped that the dynamic Chairman of Tirupati Kendra, Dr. C. Anna Rao, would, within a short time, be able to have a building of its own for the Tirupati Kendra, with the support of the people.



Dr. Sanjiva Reddy cutting the ribbon to inaugurate the Tirupati Kendra. On his right is Shri S. Ramakrishnan.

Dr. N. Sanjiva Reddy : A Pictorial Feature



Dr. N. Sanjiva Reddy being received at the Central Bhavan, with Poorna Kumbham on Dec.18, 1980.



Three Presidents. Dr. Sanjiva Reddy with Sardar Zail Singh and R. Venkataraman.



Prime Minister Morarji Desai greeting President N. Sanjiva Reddy on his 65th Birthday, on May 19, 1978.



President Dr. Sanjiva Reddy presenting a book on Agriculture written by Shri C. Subramaniam (the then Minister of Defence), to Prime Minister Charan Singh on September 6, 1979.



President N. Sanjiva Reddy with Mother Teresa on July 1, 1978.



President N. Sanjiva Reddy with Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan at AIIMS, when he was under treatment in March 1980.



President N. Sanjiva Reddy presenting an Album to Smt. Laxmi Devadas Gandhi after releasing the Rajaji Centenary Postage stamp. Also seen in the picture the then Defence Minister Jagjivan Ram.



President N. Sanjiva Reddy administering oath of office to Shri C. Subramaniam in the Union Cabinet on July 30, 1979.



Dr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy with Acharya Kripalani. Also seen in the picture is Smt. M.S. Subbalakshmi.



Dr. Sanjiva Reddy speaking at the Central Bhavan (Dec.18, 1980). Also seen in the picture are Shri Dharamsey Khatau, Bhavan's past president and Shri S. K. Patil, Congress Leader.



Dr. Sanjiva Reddy presiding over a meeting of the Rajaji Centenary Committee.



Smt. Kamala Subramaniam, author of the trilogy, Ramayana, Mahabharata and Bhagavata, receiving a copy of 'Ramayana' from Dr. Sanjiva Reddy (Sept. 3, 1981)



Dr. N. Sanjiva Reddy with King of Bhutan H. H. Wangchok on his visit to India in 1980. Seen on his left the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and the then External Affairs Minister Shri P. V. Narasimha Rao.



Dr. N. Sanjiva Reddy and Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi receiving King Birendra and Queen Aishwarya Rajya Laxmi of Nepal on their arrival at Delhi Airport in March 1980.



Dr. N. Sanjiva Reddy with American President Mr. Jimmy Carter in January 1978.

"This War is a Yagna"

G.D. Birla

Anyway, at the time when I arrived in Hastina, there was going on a tournament which had been arranged by the Acharya to let everyone see the proficiency of his pupils in handling the weapons fit for the sons of kings. I had absolutely no place there, but I was watching the 'prowess' of Arjuna, and I was hearing the praises showered on him: that he was a great archer and that there was no one to equal him. I could not brook this. There arose in my mind a desire to put him in his place, to let the people know that there are others who can be as good as he is if not better. I rushed up to the stage and challenged Arjuna. But then the fact that I was a Sutaputra came in the way. I was not allowed to compete with him because he was the son of a king while I could boast only of a charioteer for a father. Again I was insulted and I was very unhappy.

At that moment, when the entire city of Hastina was laughing at me and my audacity in challenging a son of the Royal House, Duryodhana was the only man who saw me suffering and he took me under his wing. He made me king of Anga and he asked nothing of me except my friendship. Years have passed since then, but I will never forget that magnanimous gesture of Duryodhana. There are only two people in this wide, wide world who love me and who wish me well. One is my mother Radha and the other is my friend Duryodhana. I have never been enamoured of this life of mine on this earth. I am indifferent to it. But then, so long as I am alive, my life belongs to these two: my mother and to Duryodhana."

For a moment Krishna was silent. He then said: "You are right. It is not always easy to pay the debt of gratitude. I want to ask you something else. Have you any idea as to your birth? Do you know who your mother is?"

Karna shook his head and said: "No, I do not know much. But I guess that she must have been a high-born maiden and that I am the son of a noble house. I assume that she must have been the daughter of some noble king. Her palace must have been situated by the side of a river which flowed caressing the walls of her palace. Evidently she was more concerned about her reputation than her new-born child and so, as soon as I was born, she placed me in a basket and let me float on the river. This is my guess.

"Radha was the woman who rescued me from this basket and she took me to her bosom. She brought me up. My real mother never once thought of me, I am sure. And neither was I interested in trying to trace her. I am not interested, Krishna. But why this talk of something which has been buried in the past? What benefit will result by my knowing about my mother?"

Karna was silent for a while and spoke again. He said: "Believe me, Krishna, I am not unhappy about this. I have a mother, the sweetest of mothers and she is everything to me. She is proud of me. My past has been forgotten by everyone. I have forgotten those early days of pain and humiliation. Why should I waste time talking about this?"

Krishna's eyes were full of compassion, and he looked at Karna with soft eyes. His eyes were wet with unshed tears. He spoke in a very gentle voice. He said: "Karna, it is true, what you say. Your mother does belong to a great and noble House. She is a princess. When you were born she was a maiden and since she was afraid of the censure of the world she abandoned you. But you are wrong when you say that she had no thought for you. She has not been able to forget you. Now at the present moment, she is the mother of more than one son, but her heart is full of sorrow because she remembers you and thinks of the injustice she has done you."

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 V.S.R.K.

Fifty years ago an arts and science college was started in Madras bearing the illustrious name of the patriot-monk Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902). Normally, the golden jubilee of an educational institution should be an affair of the institution concerned but the circumstances of

the founding of Vivekananda College not only give it a national significance but make us reflect, rather sadly, on the continuing discriminatory policies of Government, both at the Centre and in the States, in the matter of admissions to higher educational institutions. Let the circumstances be stated in the words of the first Principal of the college, Prof. D.S. Sarma. He has said: "The origin of this college lay in the then (mid-fifties) Madras Government's policy of admission into colleges on communal considerations and not on grounds of academic merit. Many brilliant students with high marks found it difficult to get admission anywhere. So a committee of public-spirited gentlemen was formed in Mylapore (a part of Madras) with the object of collecting donations and starting a new college where admissions would be made on merit and merit only."



Prof. D. S. Sarma

It may not be right or proper, especially for an old student who has had no contact with his alma mater for more than four and a half decades, to assert that the college has stuck to its original policy to this day. But students who had the good fortune to be in the college when Prof. D.S. Sarma was the Principal (1946-48) would break a lance with anyone who cites an instance of deviation from the proclaimed policy of giving due recognition to merit. Prof. Sarma left the college not on grounds of ill-health (he was 66 then) but due to the interference of the Secretary of the college on one side and the Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home on the other. There was also another factor. The idealism and enthusiasm of the staff started waning and there were quarrels among them as to who should become Prof. Sarma's successor as Principal.

Any institution, and more so an educational one, derives its distinct individuality from its head. This was the case with Vivekananda College in the initial years of Prof. Sarma's stewardship. Not only were the results 'brilliant' but the atmosphere of the college was one of solemnity and restrained enthusiasm on the part of the students. There were no agitations; even on the first Independence Day, there was no

riotous display of enthusiasm. The students assembled quietly on the morning of Aug. 15, 1947 and took a pledge that they would ever be loyal to the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. When the Nizam surrendered at the end of the Police Action on Sept. 17, 1948, the students who had gathered for some competition, let out shouts of joy and appeared to have transgressed a little the limits of decorum. Prof. Sarma chided them gently and declared the next day a holiday.

Another memorable occasion in 1948 was the visit of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who told the students after unveiling a painting of Mahatma Gandhi: "Many of you are young men here and have only a mental conception of Mahatmaji's work in India. Those of us who have known him, worked with him and saw this mighty mass of Indian humanity being moulded by that powerful personality, disunited elements brought together and made to co-operate in a common task and struggle - it was a wonderful sight indeed... You will have in this portrait a reminder of all that he stood for and of the fact that nations are not made by little men or by little ways of thinking. If India is to be a great nation, as she is undoubtedly bound to be, it is

up to you to think in a big way and keep your integrity of purpose." (From Prof. Sarma's autobiography 'From Literature to Religion', a Bhavan's publication)

The tragic assassination of Mahatma Gandhi on Jan 30, 1948 induced an atmosphere of gloom for over a month in the college. A lamp was kept burning at the central hall of the college and after the funeral of Gandhiji, Prof. Sarma made one of his memorable speeches on the Father of the Nation. He broke down initially and, later composing himself, spoke for nearly an hour in his characteristic way, slowly, precisely. He traced the several influences on Gandhiji - Gokhale, Tilak, Sri Ramakrishna, among others. He concluded his speech by saying: "Mahatma Gandhi is a most significant figure in the history of humanity. Unless all the evolution on this planet is going to end in a fiasco, mankind must accept the gospel of non-violence. Men must turn this difficult corner and definitely give up the ways of the brute. Amidst all the narrow jealousies and hatreds, the cold wars and false propaganda, which we are witnessing in the international sphere to-day, Mahatma Gandhi stands like the great Himalayas pointing out the safe way to mankind. Future generations will remember him not so much as the architect of India's

freedom, not so much as a saint or hero, but one of the saviours of mankind, in the same rank as Buddha and Christ."

Occasionally, Prof. Sarma used to take a round along the corridors when the classes were in progress. With head erect, his white turban perched on his head, neither turning this way or that, he used to pass on. Rarely he stepped into any class but if he did, it was to tell the students something good and cheerful. He was held in great reverence and there were certainly some students who would have liked him to enter their classes and speak to them.

Right from the twenties when Prof. Sarma became the Superintendent of the Presidency College Hostel, he regretted that generations of Hindu students were growing in total ignorance of the essentials of the religion of their birth. He took it upon himself to bring a ray of light in this darkness by writing a series of books on Hinduism - **Tales and Teachings of Hinduism, Primer of Hinduism, What is Hinduism? Renaissance of Hinduism**, among others. The **Primer of Hinduism** was prescribed as a text-book for the students of Vivekananda College and a compulsory test was held in the subject. Mondays at the college began with a prayer meeting

at which either Prof. Sarma or a member of the staff spoke briefly on some aspect of religion or on the teachings of holy men. At these meetings, 'Upasana Sruti' and 'Upasana Gita', specially compiled by Prof. Sarma (with English translation), were recited. He made it a point to see that two 'Vaidiks' joined in the recitation so that the students got the right intonation.

Prof. Sarma's annual reports at the College Day functions were looked forward to with interest. They were not just statistical records of students' achievements but essays in fine English prose. The reports reflected the personality of the Principal—gentleman and patriot, teacher and patriarch. The annual college magazine, 'Viveka', invariably carried an article from his pen - sometimes biographical, sometimes literary or religious. They were read with great interest. The principal's annual report and the annual college magazine are not usually taken seriously by students or teachers. But in Prof. Sarma's hands they ceased to be routine exercises and therefore they had an appeal.

Prof. Sarma had the able support of his staff, most of them veterans in their subjects with a sense of idealism. That, in their early fifties, they joined a newly started college that held out no great financial

prospects was a tribute to their spirit of self-sacrifice. One remembers T.R. Raghava Sastri (Mathematics), M. Narayanamurthy (Physics), N. Ananthavaidyanathan (Chemistry), G. Venkataraman (Biology), C. Jagannathachari (Tamil) and R.S. Venkatarama Sastri (Sanskrit). Of the Professor of English, K. Subramanyam, who was popular with all the students and more so with the inmates of the hostel of which he was the warden, Prof. Sarma said: "I remember having seen many students returning to the college after a vacation and bringing him gifts of eatables of all sorts prepared in their homes. I was never able to inspire such love among my students. I seem to have inspired more fear than love!" Prof. Sarma inspired not fear but reverence, respect for national leaders, faith in religion and pursuit of learning with a sense of purpose. He introduced a tutorial system under which lecturers visited the parents of students who were found weak in one or more subjects. English composition notebooks were corrected and students who consistently got poor marks were summoned and admonished.

As a teacher, Prof. Sarma was truly in the great upanishadic tradition. As he once exhorted fellow-teachers, the teacher's primary loyalty should be to the subject he

taught. Prof. Sarma's subject was English literature and he taught the subject for several decades with singular devotion. And, as literature, as he conceived it, was bound up with religion, he became a teacher of religion both within and outside the academic institutions in which he served. If literature enables us to see the meaning and significance of life, he said, religion opens the doorway to God. "Literature is purely

human, religion is both human and divine."

The first three batches of students of Vivekananda College (1946-48) will always cherish the memory of Principal Sarma, handsome, scholarly, dignified, gentle in speech, uncompromising on principles and propagating the highest values of religion and literature.

□□□

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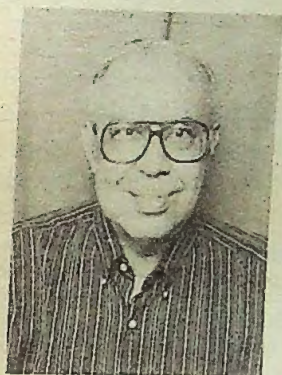
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OBITUARY :

Shri H.G. Mirchandani - Pioneer in Children's Books

Anant Pai



H. G. Mirchandani

Shri Hargobind G. Mirchandani, a Director of India Book House Limited, who passed away on May 30, 1996 after a prolonged illness, was a life-long friend of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. It was he who took the initiative in trying to secure, for Bhavan's publications, a wider market through the various outlets open to India Book House.

Shri Hargobind Mirchandani was born in Hyderabad, Sindh, on

February 4, 1928, in a Sindhi middle-class family. He had his education, in Bombay, upto intermediate college. From 1948 to 1951 he worked in his uncle, the Late Shri K.T. Mirchandani's shop in Manila. He shifted to Bombay in April 1951 and started working for the bookshop India Book House opened by his uncle, Shri G.L. Mirchandani. He was married in the same year, on August 29, to Km. Rekha.

India Book House grew from strength to strength under the stewardship of Shri G.L. Mirchandani. Shri Hargobind travelled widely to promote sales and took an active part in its growth. The credit for the success of the publishing activities in a big way goes to Shri Hargobind Mirchandani. Pearl Publications was the first venture in publishing. Later, Echo Books were published under the banner of India Book House in 1966. Amar Chitra Katha was launched in 1967. But the real resounding success came around 1972, in the Amar Chitra Katha series, after more

than three years of hard struggle. Tinkle, a very successful fortnightly for children, was launched in 1980.

Shri Hargobind Mirchandani was deeply interested in music also and India Book House entered the field of audio cassettes much before the stalwarts of today did. He was particularly, interested in devotional music and under the name of 'Amarnad' over a couple of hundred

audio cassettes were produced.

Perhaps one reason why he was engrossed in the field of children's books and in producing cassettes for children was that he himself had no children. His friends remember him as a "very obliging" person. He was "a very loving husband", "always considerate" as Smt. Rekha puts it.

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— C. Rajagopalachari



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